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Title: Further discussion on the montion for consideration of National Jute Board Bill , 2006 moved by Shri Shankersinh Vaghela on the 30th April, 2008 (Bill passed).

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, we come to Item Number 38 which is the further consideration of the National Jute Board Bill.

Shri Kashi Ram Rana – not present.

Shri S.K. Kharventhan.

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN (PALANI): Sir, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity.

Jute is an important crop in West Bengal in the country. Jute Sector occupies an important place in the economy of the country and it fetches thousand crore of rupees per annum to the Government of India by way of exports. Nearly 1.4 lakh people are directly engaged in this sector. The Jute Manufactures' Development Council (JMDC) is incorporated under the Jute Manufacturers' Council Act, 1983. The National Centre for Jute Diversification (NCJD), a registered Society was set up by the Government of India, by the Ministry of Textiles. Our UPA Government has taken steps to merge both JMDC and NCJD and constituted this Board viz. National Jute Board.

The Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha by the hon. Minister of Textiles on 26th May, 2006. Then it was referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Labour and it has submitted its Report to Lok Sabha on 24th November, 2006. This Bill also seeks to repeal Jute Manufacturers' Development Act, 1983. The proposed National Jute Board aimed to develop the promotion of jute and jute products.

The constitution of National Jute Board is elaborately explained in Clause 3. The proposed Board will be consisting of 20 members appointed by the Government of India from jute sector, jute industry, Jute Research Institute and various other Ministries including Ministry of Textiles, Agriculture and Food and Public Distribution. The Secretary, Ministry of Textiles will be *ex-officio* Chairperson. It is an Advisory Body to the Government of India and advice in all matters relating to jute development, cultivation and exports.

The above clause 3 elaborates about various nominations to National Jute Board but excluded jute growers. There is no representation given for the jute growers. However, on all national level boards like Coir Board, Coconut Board, Silk Board are having nominations among the growers.

Even the Standing Committee has also recommended for including the representation from jute farmers and jute workers. But the Ministry has failed to amend the Bill suitably to include proper representation among the farmers and the workers. It is a serious lapse. Hence, the hon. Minister has to take steps to include one or two representatives from the farming community in this Board. In the same manner, there is no representation from the people's representatives like MPs of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha in it. In other Boards, adequate nominations were given to MPs. In the same manner, three Members of Lok Sabha and two Members of Rajya Sabha may be nominated to the National Jute Board.

Furthermore, the Bill also failed to include the Experts from Jute Technology and the related fields in the Board. While Jute Manufacturers' Development Council Act, 1983 provides for appointment of such members in the Jute Manufacturers' Development Council, this Board must have representation from the Experts. The Standing Committee has also recommended to include such experts in the Jute Board. Clause III, sub-clause (F) explains about the nomination of two members from the organized sector in the jute industry and clause (G) explains about nomination of two members from the decentralized sector in the jute industry.[a40] But in clause 2, there is no explanation for both the terms organized sector and decentralized sector.

With respect to the functions of the Board also, there must be inclusion of provisions about the undertaking of Jute Research and Development, Human Resource Development, Modernization of Jute Sector and technologies and steps should be taken to protect the interests of the jute growers and workers for their welfare.

This is a Bill to constitute a Jute Board, an umbrella organization to protect the interests of the industry and in clause 2, there is no reference and explanation about the word 'jute'.

There is a great resentment among the farming community about the operation of the Jute Corporation of India since they are having very lesser number of procurement centres throughout the country. The Jute Corporation of India is the field level organization directly dealing with the farmers and it has to take steps to solve the problems being faced by the jute growers.

Next, I want to suggest that in the past, in groceries and other shops, jute bags were used for carrying goods. Now, in most of the places, in most of the shops, only plastic papers are used for carrying the grocery items which is not environmentally healthy. Hence, small bags are to be manufactured in the jute industry and to be made available to the public at affordable prices in place of plastic bags which are by and large in use nowadays and the use of plastic bags are altogether to be removed.

In the same manner, previously, cement was packed in gunny bags made out of jute and they are now replaced with thick paper bags. All the cement industries in the country are to be directed to use the jute bags for loading of cement.

Finally, I would like to congratulate the hon. Ministers of Textiles, Shri Shankersinh Vaghela, Shri EVKS Elangovan and his team for presenting this landmark Bill and to protect the jute industry.

With these words, I am concluding my speech and supporting this Bill.

SHRI SANTASRI CHATTERJEE (SERAMPORE): Hon. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Bill as introduced by the Textiles Minister Shri Shankersinh Vaghela. But I have got certain reservations about the Bill.

Sir, the hon. Minister knows it that as a Member of the Standing Committee on Labour, I had the opportunity to go into the details of the Bill. Our entire Committee visited almost all the jute-growing States and took evidence from all the stakeholders. By my side, there are two hon. Members who are also in the said Committee, who were taking much pains to go through the entire Bill to discuss in its entirety and then recommended to Parliament to incorporate some new clauses to amend, to modify so that the Bill really serves the purpose for which it has been introduced.

As you know, the National Jute Policy is long overdue. I do thank the hon. Minister that though late yet he has come forward to introduce the Bill in Parliament. I am saying that it is being deliberated at the fag end of the House. Even then the importance of the Jute Industry needs no special narration.

I hail from the State of West Bengal which is contributing to the national exchequer in all possible ways. I may tell you that four million farmers are there not only in West Bengal but also in other States. They give direct employment to about 2.6 lakh industrial workers and livelihood to another 1.4 lakh people in the tertiary sector and allied activities.[R41]

The production process in the jute industry goes through a variety of activities which include cultivation of raw jute, processing of jute fibre, spinning, weaving, bleaching, dyeing, finishing and marketing of both raw jute and its finished products.

The industry is labour intensive and as such, its labour output ratio is also high. In spite of various difficulties faced by the industry, capacity utilisation of the industry is around 75 per cent.

Sir, you will be glad to learn that this industry contributes to the exports to the tune of nearly Rs. 1,000 crore.

The Jute Manufacturers' Development Council, incorporated under the Jute Manufacturers' Development Council Act, 1983 and the National Centre for Jute Diversification, a society set up by the Central Government in the Ministry of Textiles and registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 are the institutions which are presently coordinating the operations of the large number of functions in the jute sector.

The point is, as the Bill provides for the establishment of a National Jute Board for the development of the cultivation, manufacture and marketing of jute and jute products and for matters connected therewith and incidental thereto, I am glad that the hon. Minister has already circulated certain amendments to the proposed Bill on the basis of the recommendations of the Standing Committee. It is all right. I support these amendments. When they are moved, I will support them.

But the main point is, we have to improve the condition of farmers. I would like to know whether they are getting remunerative prices. What is the price policy? Research work has been undertaken and so many recommendations are there, but I am sorry to say that the Government lacks the political will to protect the interests of farmers. Why are they committing suicides? Why are they under serious economic distress? Why are bank loans not provided to them properly? Taking into consideration the entire global scenario, in the era of globalisation, in the regime of advanced technology, why has no modernisation taken place in the jute industry? I would like to submit that further research work is very much necessary to see that the interests of farmers are protected.

Sir, we visited Meghalaya, we visited Assam, we visited Andhra Pradesh, we visited some mills in Vizianagaram area, we talked to the workers, to the ordinary farmers and we came know that their rights and facilities are not properly protected. Therefore, through this Bill, if the Government is serious, we can do some service to the nation.

Then, what is the condition of jute workers in the country? I am glad that on the basis of the recommendation of the Standing Committee, Vaghelaji has accepted to include some representatives of the workers and farmers in the proposed Jute Board.

Sir, in my State, the jute industry has been practically taken over by the speculators and traders. The traders and speculators are now purchasing raw jute at low prices and amassing huge profits. Whenever tripartite agreements are entered into amongst the Government, trade unions and the employers, the jute barons in West Bengal pay scant regard to them. There are limitations in the existing labour laws which cannot force the employers to abide by such agreements. Even workers are engaged for a wage of Rs. 40 per day in the name of trainee which we cannot accept.[R42]

T[r43]he jute workers of West Bengal, cutting across Party affiliations, are united to uphold the rights, the dignity and for the development of the jute industry throughout the country. West Bengal leads the way, but the Government of India should also intervene against the recalcitrant employers, against the anti-people, anti-worker employers so that they see reason. The West Bengal Government has intervened but that is not sufficient, intervention from the Government of India is all the more necessary and this Jute Board will help the jute workers for a decent living, for decent wages for which they have been fighting. So is the condition in Andhra Pradesh.

Some of the industrialists from West Bengal – it is not proper to name a particular industrialist – have left West Bengal after closing down two or three mills and have settled down in Vizianagaram. Under the leadership of hon. Chairman of the Standing Committee on Labour and Textile, Shri S.S. Reddy, who hails from that State, when we met the workers personally, they were afraid of talking to us because there is no organised trade union there.

Sir, you hear the plight of the workers. They are very low paid. There is no ESI, no provident fund, no social security. The Jute Board is ought to take note of the situation and try to see how to alleviate the sufferings of the farmers as well as the workers. It should also take steps to develop the research, which is very important.

Sir, I do not want to go further as time is short, but I would like to draw the attention of this House to one of the very important recommendations of the Committee which has not been accepted by the Textiles Ministry. It is very painful and without that you cannot run the Jute Board in a proper and efficient way. The purpose will be defeated if Jute Corporation of India is excluded from the provision of the National Jute Board Bill.

16.33 hrs.

(Shri Balasaheb Vikhe Patil *in the Chair*)

I quote from the Report of the Standing Committee, para 59, page 20:

> "During the study visits of the Committee to West Bengal, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh, farmers had aired their views strongly on the inadequacy of operations of Jute Corporation of India, particularly with regard to less number of procurement centres being operated by them, more so the procurement centres are not being operated on an even pace in all the States realizing in procurement of very less quantity of raw jute by JCCI from the farmers.
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> The Committee are of the view that Jute Corporation of India is the single organization directly dealing with the farmers and if there is any shortcoming in its functions, it would impede the role of the jute sector in general and the welfare of the jute farmers in particular. Hence, the Committee recommend that sufficient number of procurement centres, including mobile ones, should be opened by the appropriate body which would be established after the formation of the National Jute Board to procure maximum quantity of raw jute from the farmers. Action taken in this regard should be intimated to the Committee within three months."

Sir, though I have not tabled any official amendment on this Bill, I would request, Shri Vaghela to reconsider, to think twice to incorporate in the Bill in the National Jute Board, the Jute Corporation of India the main agency, which will protect the interests of the farmers. If it is outside the purview of the National Jute Board, I am afraid, the very purpose of the Bill may be defeated.

So, once again, I would request Shri Vaghela to reconsider our proposal, though, I have not tabled any official amendment on

this Bill.[r44]

With these words, I do support the Bill with certain reservations and unofficially I am proposing here the amendments for the consideration of the Government.

SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA (JAGATSINGHPUR): Thank you, Chairman, Sir, for giving me an opportunity to support this Bill.

You are well aware that Orissa is a jute growing State and for about 100 years, people of my State and more particularly the farmers used to grow jute as a second crop, that is, as a cash crop. But due to lack of proper incentive, the farmers are not encouraged to concentrate on jute cultivation as a result of which now the farmers of our State are suffering a lot.

I would like to highlight that the National Jute Policy, no doubt, will encourage for marketing of the jute products because new traditional technology should be adopted for encouraging the jute farmers for cultivation. As you know, due to introduction of the synthetic materials, that is due to plastic and polythene, nowadays it is not environment-friendly. This is high time that we should encourage the jute products like jute bags. Out of jute products also, we are preparing handicrafts as a result of which we are exporting those handicrafts to other country and earning a lot. But due to lack of proper spirit, such a system is now collapsing. I would, therefore, like to appeal to the hon. Minister that since Orissa has its own base for jute cultivation as one of the jute growing States, proper incentive should be given to the farmers for jute cultivation. Also they should be provided loans with minimum rate of interest. As a result of which, there will be encouragement amongst the farmers for growing jute. It is also noticed that as far as manufacturing is concerned, there is not a single unit in the State of Orissa. We should also find out that with public-private partnership, some of the jute industries must be established in the States with a view to encourage our farmers. As you know that most of the jute mills are in West Bengal and about 70 jute mills have been closed down within these few years. Most of the people from different parts of the country are working in jute mills in West Bengal, and we are also supplying jute from our State. Kendrapada, which is one of the districts in my State, was producing jute and most of the farmers were depending on the jute cultivation. But nowadays due to lack of proper market, the farmers are not encouraged to cultivate jute. So this is high time; I would appeal the hon. Minister that a National Jute Policy be framed and there must be a new law which should be introduced so that the farmers will be encouraged for preparing the jute bags and other handicraft products in order to curb down the activities of the synthetic market.

My humble appeal is this. As you know that Orissa is one of the backward States dominated by tribals and Scheduled Castes and there is need to encourage the farmers of the State so also the farmers of the other States. So it is high time that a National Jute Policy be introduced to safeguard the interest of the farmers in various aspects.[r45] [H46]

Sir, as you know, in the Temple of Lord Jagannath, jute bags and jute products are used. Now, there is no encouragement given to the jute farmers. As a result, jute products are not marketed properly in the State.

We feel proud that our civilization is based on agricultural products. The agriculturists have to be encouraged. Now-a-days due to devastating floods in Kendrapara area, jute farmers in that area have lost everything; they are in panic. The loss sustained by them should be assessed by the hon. Minister. They must also be properly compensated for the loss. Unless they are properly compensated, they will be never encouraged to cultivate jute. A time will come that the agriculturists who are doing jute cultivation will be no more interested to concentrate on jute cultivation. Jute cultivation was traditionally encouraged since time immemorial. So, it is high time that a law should be introduced to see that synthetic items should not be marketed in the country, and jute cultivators and jute marketing should be encouraged and protected so that jute producers will be more encouraged to produce all these products.

Apart from that, I would like to make an appeal to the Government that some jute industries must be established in Orissa in order to encourage jute farmers and it will also be a new incentive in their mind to cultivate jute.

Finally I would like to thank the hon. Minister for bringing this dynamic Bill because as you know *krishi* is the lifeline of the country's economic prosperity.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, Shri Mahesh Kanodia.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI SANTASRI CHATTERJEE (SERAMPORE): Sir, I am on a point of information ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Under what rule are you making this point of information?

SHRI SANTASRI CHATTERJEE : Sir, if he is yielding, for the information of the hon. Member and the entire House I would like to say that in West Bengal all the jute mills are now in full operation; no mill is closed now. The workers are fully engaged. This is for his information. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is no question of dialogue now.

Now, Shri Mahesh Kanodia.

श्री महेश कनोडीया (पाटन): महोदय, मैं आपका बहुत धन्यवाद करता हूं, जो आपने मुझे इस बिल पर बोलने का मौका दिया, इसके साथ ही माननीय कपड़ा मंत्री श्री शंकर सिंह वाघेला जी का भी मैं शुक्रिया अदा करता हूं। मैं यह कहना चाहूंगा कि जो जूट के उत्पादन का कार्य है, वह बहुत अच्छा है। जूट का पूरे भारत में उत्पादन ज्यादा से ज्यादा हो, क्योंकि उससे बहुत सारे काम बनते हैं। जूट के इस विधेयक को मैं समर्थन देता हूं, इसके साथ ही मैं एक बात कहूंगा कि इसके कामों के लिए अनुसूचित जाति और अनुसूचित जनजाति के जो लोग हैं, उनको ज्यादा से ज्यादा इसमें काम दिया जाए और किसानों का खास ध्यान रखा जाए। मैं आपसे यह कहना चाहूंगा कि गुजरात में जहां-जहां पर इसके उद्योग हैं, गुजरात के ग्रामीण इलाकों में, छोटे-छोटे गांवों में, इसके उद्योग बढ़ाये जायें, ताकि अनुसूचित जाति और अनुसूचित जनजाति के लोगों को इसका ज्यादा लाभ मिले और किसानों को भी इसका ज्यादा लाभ मिले, इसके साथ ही किसानों के काम को भी ज्यादा बढ़ावा मिले।

मैं एक बार फिर से आपके इस विधेयक को समर्थन देता हूं और अपनी बात समाप्त करता हूं, धन्यवाद।

[p47]

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY (BERHAMPORE, WEST BENGAL): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Bill under the nomenclature "The National Jute Board Bill'.

I must appreciate our hon. Minister, Shri Shankarsinh Vaghela that under his stewardship, the UPA Government has announced the National Jute Policy in the year, 2005.

The objective of the Bill is to constitute a Jute Board by merging the existing Jute Manufactures Development Council and the National Centre for Jute Diversification along with their funds and manpower. It is intended to obviate the multiplicity of various programmes and organizations so that the National Jute Board could act as an umbrella body for the entire jute sector.

In the present scenario, as we know, by the enactment of a law under Jute Management Act, since 1987 we have been protecting the jute growers and the jute workers throughout the country.

Sir, most of the time, the synthetic lobby is opposing the mandatory jute packaging mechanism by various forums. However, the hon. Minister and the UPA Government at the harmony of the UPA's National Common Minimum Programme is still maintaining the mandatory packaging mechanism so as to provide succour to the jute growers and the jute industry.

But I feel that there is a sense of fear, which has gripped the employees of the Jute Corporation of India. So, I would suggest to the hon. Minister to evolve a mechanism so that the apprehension of the employees of the Jute Corporation of India is mollified. There is no denying the fact that over the years, the Jute Corporation of India has been performing its job exceedingly well. May I ask the hon. Minister one simple query that whether the National Jute Board had been constituted well before the introduction of this Bill in the Lok Sabha on 22nd May, 2006? If it is possible, I would request the hon. Minister to incorporate the Jute Corporation of India in the National Jute Board. It is because what I perceive through the Bill is that the aims and objectives of the Bill for constituting the National Jute Board, which will function as a facilitator rather than as a regulator, include an integrated

approach to jute cultivation; to promote production of better quality of raw jute; to enhance productivity of raw jute; to promote or undertake arrangements for better marketing and stabilization of price of raw jute; to promote standardization of raw jute and jute products; to suggest norms of efficiency for raw jute; manufacture of jute products, propagate information useful to the growers of raw jute and [r48] manufacturers of jute products; to promote and undertake measures for quality control of raw jute and jute products; to assist and encourage studies and research for improvement of processing, quality, technique of grading and packaging of raw jute; to promote and undertake surveys or studies aimed at collection and formulation of statistics regarding raw jute and jute products; to promote standardization of jute manufacturers to promote the development of production of jute manufacturers by increasing the efficiency and productivity of jute industry; to sponsor, assist, etc., pertaining to the jute sector; to maintain and improve existing markets and develop new markets within and outside the country for jute manufacturers; to sponsor, assist, etc., in the matters related to materials, equipment, etc., in those already used in the jute industry; to provide and create necessary infrastructural facilities, etc.; to organize workshops, conferences, lectures, etc., for the purpose of production and promotion of jute products; to secure better working conditions for workers engaged in the jute industry.

If you go through the function of the JCI, it appears that the Jute Board is somewhere overlapping the JCI. Therefore, I would request the hon. Minister to consider the incorporation of JCI, which has the requisite infrastructure to reach to the doorsteps of the jute farmers and help promoting and undertaking assignments for better marketing and stabilization of prices of raw jute. It is because in various ways, the functions of the National Jute Board and the functions of the existing Jute Corporation of India are similar, as it appears to me. Maybe, there may be some kind of legal and administrative problems, etc. But I think the Government should ponder over it so that those employees who have served our country for long should not think that they are being deprived of their dues. I think the Government will consider it.

I am coming from the District in West Bengal. The name of my district is Murshidabad which is supposed to produce the largest quantity of jute in the country. But the fact is that the jute workers are really in a state of despair. Their last resort is the Jute Corporation of India only. By providing the Minimum Support Price to the jute growers, the Government has been providing their livelihood. You will be astonished to note that during the summer season, the jute growers do not even find water. It is not fresh water but it is simple water from ponds, lakes, canals, etc. They do not find the requisite water for rotting their jute sticks. The State Government of West Bengal is so indifferent that they are unable to provide the water to the jute growers so that they can rot their jute sticks. The entire jute growers, the predominant section of jute growing people belong to the Eastern sector where once upon a time, the industry in India had set its foot by way of jute industry.

As per the Jute Policy, the Government has targeted 2010 for the export of Rs.5,000 crore worth of jute products.[m49]

May I know from the hon. Minister as to what kind of measures he has adopted to meet that target of reaching five thousand crores of jute products which are to be exported? The jute policy was announced in the year 2005. But still, the quantum of jute export is hovering around one thousand crores. We know that there is a golden opportunity due to this golden fibre. People around the world are getting conscious for environment-friendly products. In that context this golden fibre can carve out a niche for our country provided we are ready to grab the situation.

Still the jute industry has been suffering from the lack of modern technology. Nobody can deny it. Still, the jute industry has been surviving over an obsolete technology. In the age of cut throat competition, in the age of globalised economy can we compete with this kind of obsolete kind of technology to deal with, to compete with the other competitors in the world?

Here also, the Government in its jute policy stated that : "For, this is a multi-disciplinary mechanism to formulate policy measures and suggest specific action plan, creation of a brand equity fund for jute products consistent with the WTO norms and incorporation of the Export Promotion Council in the proposed Jute Board shall be done." I do not know what kind of measures so far have been taken to that direction.

Last but not least, everybody knows that the entire country has now been pondering over for the use of jute bags etc. It is because plastic has become a menace for the environment. I do not know whether it is in the context of this Bill or not. But I propose to the Government to introduce some mandatory provision for the use of jute products so that on the one hand we can save our environment and on the other we can promote the jute industry including helping the jute growers and jute farmers. Some 42 lakh farmers are engaged in this sector in addition to 0.14 million workers in the tertiary sector also.

With these words, I again support the Bill and wish that the Government and the hon. Minister will take very relevant measures to sustain, to develop the jute sector which may be a pride for us in the future. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Thank you. In a free economy, all mandatory measures are very difficult.

I now invite Shrimati Botcha Jhansi Lakshmi to speak.

SHRIMATI JHANSI LAKSHMI BOTCHA (BOBBILI) : Thank you, Sir. I may be permitted to speak from here.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Yes.

SHRIMATI JHANSI LAKSHMI BOTCHA : I may also be permitted to speak in the regional language.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Have you given notice?

SHRIMATI JHANSI LAKSHMI BOTCHA : Yes, Sir. [k50]

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH (RAJGARH): The translation is not available.

SHRI ABU AYES MONDAL (KATWA): Sir, the translation is not there.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Can somebody look into the issue of translation?

17.00 hrs.

SHRIMATI JHANSI LAKSHMI BOTCHA : If there is no translation, then there is no problem. I will speak in English.

Hon. Chairman, Sir, I thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to speak on this important legislation. I rise to support the National Jute Board Bill, 2006.

The creation of the National Jute Board is long overdue. This Board is in the interest of the farmers and labourers. Now, we can expect that the Jute Board -- like the Coir Board, Cotton Board and Coconut Board -- will coordinate and implement the programmes of the jute sector. The Bill seeks to merge the Jute Manufactures Development Council (JMDC) and the National Centre for Jute Diversification (NCJD), of course, with their funds and manpower. I welcome it. This will synergize the efforts of the jute development across the country in general and the Eastern region in particular.

As we all know, jute and jute products are eco-friendly. We should encourage its use in various aspects of the economic development. We are spending crores of rupees on controlling global warming. This is going to be our future challenge. Since jute industry is eco-friendly, there is no other industry like this industry. I would like to suggest to the hon. Minister Shri Vaghela that we should develop it on a large-scale by providing subsidy to this industry. Jute should be announced as an eco-friendly industry, and the jute industry will definitely contribute in the reduction of global warming.

The jute industry is also labour-intensive. It provides employment to lakhs of people. Now, with the establishment of the National Jute Board, I am sure that the industry will grow further and provide more employment opportunities to the people. I thank the UPA Government and the hon. Textile Minister Shri Vaghela for this effort.

After Eastern region, North-Coastal Andhra comes second in the production of jute. The first place goes to West Bengal. In Andhra Pradesh, there are about 24 jute industries in and around my Bobbili Parliamentary constituency. Therefore, I interact very often with the employees and employers of the jute industry. But the jute industry has not developed as it should with the passing of time on the lines of other industries due to lack of technology upgradation.

The quality of seeds and rutting of jute is a major problem in jute cultivation. Consequently, farmers producing jute are shying away from cultivation. If the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for jute is fixed uniformly, then it may attract more farmers to cultivate jute once again.

There is a need to bring the jute industry into the cooperative sector -- like the sugar industry -- to support the farmers and to boost its cultivation. I also suggest that -- on the lines of sericulture and pisciculture -- jute promotion machinery should be established and strengthened at the field-level and district-level for jute cultivation. Further, I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister that the Indian Jute Industry Research Association (IJIRA) is based in West Bengal. Earlier, there was a branch of IJIRA in my constituency in Vizianagaram district, Andhra Pradesh, but all of a sudden they have shifted it to another place.[r51]

I do not know the reasons. The Ministry should revive the branch at Vizianagaram to encourage farmers to take up jute cultivation and for coordinating jute manufacturing and marketing.

Though jute package has been made mandatory through the Jute Package Order for food industry, cement industry and sugar

industry, it has been violated repeatedly. By violating this order, these industries are using high polymerised plastic bags and synthetic material for packaging purpose thus harming the environment. Jute Package Order has to be implemented strictly. Moreover, import of jute material from other countries should be suspended forthwith to protect the Indian jute industry.

Sir, the Government was kind enough to provide subsidized power to many industries. I request the hon. Minister to extend subsidized power to the jute industry also. Jute industry consumes J.B. Oil for the production of jute. Subsidy should be given to J.B. Oil on par with diesel. It is also one of the parameters. The Minister should make efforts to reduce its price so that the cost of production of jute comes down.

The subsidy on the machinery for starting new jute plants was capped at Rs. 75 lakh. This should be made as a percentage of total machinery cost, say, 20 per cent. The Government should give 20 per cent subsidy in the total manufacturing cost of the machinery. This will help entrepreneurs in starting and upgrading their plants with latest machinery and optimum utilization of installed capacity.

There should be an integrated planning for effective coordination for jute cultivation, manufacturing and marketing. I sincerely believe that the proposed Board will definitely fulfil these objectives.

Regarding the composition of the National Jute Board, I want to say a few words. Keeping in mind, the interests of jute farmers, employees and employers of the jute industry, they should be given proportional representation in the Board. Then only the real purpose of constituting the Board will be fulfilled. As of now, 20 members are already there in the Board. I would humbly request that the farmers and workers should also be included in this Board.

One more point is that there are so many sick industries in my constituency which have been referred to the BIFR. Please consider their cases and support those industries. Please also constitute a Common Wage Board to protect and give more benefits to the employees.

With these few words, I support the National Jute Board Bill, 2006 whole-heartedly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, I call upon Shri Suresh Prabhu, who is the last speaker and he will be followed by the hon. Minister.

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU (RAJAPUR): Sir, I support the National Jute Board Bill which was presented to this House for passing. For a long time, we have ignored the jute sector considerably. In fact, we have been saying that the Government's policy has been biased in favour of artificial fibre, chemical fibre and not in favour of natural fibre. This is true for cotton; it is true for jute; it is true for many of the natural fibres that we produce in India. In fact, globally, there is a growing concern about the ill-effect of the material that is produced in factories which are not biodegradable in nature. Once they are created, they remain on this Planet without the ability of the natural forces to absorb them and, therefore, they create a huge nuisance for the whole humanity. Despite this, we have been favouring, as opposed to natural fibre, the artificial fibre. [r52]

As a result of this, we are seeing that cotton textiles are not worn by many people and cotton is not favoured. We are going in for synthetic fibre. Therefore, the same is the situation in the case of jute. The jute producing areas of India have suffered a lot in the past; those who are working in the jute sector, have lost their jobs; the jute farmers have committed suicide, without getting any package that is probably normally offered to such farmers these days. So, they have really suffered a lot. Therefore, I welcome this measure, that you are trying to do something in a very positive way to revive this sector. I welcome this.

While you do this, I really think that we need to think out of the box and see. I will give you one example. The Bill essentially is talking about creation of a Jute Board. I was looking at the composition of the Jute Board – who are going to be the members of the Jute Board? There is going to be a Joint Secretary, a person who is nominated by the Government from various functionaries. But I do not find a single person who can help the Jute Board to market the jute products to the larger community. So, I request the hon. Minister to look at it like this.

The Jute Board should consist of people who are designers, who can design better products of jute so that more people would like to buy. The people who are in the export sector should also be involved so that they will be able to export this product. I

hope that the Minister will agree with me that there are a large number of countries who like to import such natural fibre. If you can create a Board in which such people are involved, they will be able to market it better; they will be able to position jute as an attractive proposition for the rest of the world, and therefore, we should try and do this.

This is a limited Bill. It talks about the creation of a Jute Board only. This Bill will not serve its purpose unless the Government comes out with a comprehensive policy to revive the jute sector as a whole. To do that, this is the right time to think about taxing the competing products which compete with jute. For a long time you may remember and recall – when I was young, Sir, you would have been still young – that in those days, we used to always think of jute bags if we want to transport anything. But now we do not use jute bags; jute bags have become generic name; but that has gone. Now it has been taken over by HTP bags, LTP bags, etc. It is in vogue now. Can we not therefore think about taxing such competing products? If you can put some environment tax on those products – because they are environmentally degrading – the jute will really become an attractive proposition.

Therefore, my request to the hon. Minister is this; this is a welcome Bill and we support it; but while we do this, we request him to come out with a comprehensive policy to deal with this sector so that this entire sector can be revived.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The price will also be competitive.

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU : Sir, your Sugar Cooperative has become successful because you tried to benefit the farmers. But I am talking about the jute farmers here, but not the sugarcane farmers. We should try to do it in a way that will actually benefit the farmers who are planting jute in their farms. I really request the hon. Minister to do this. I support the Bill.

वस्त्र मंत्री (श्री शंकरसिंह वाघेला) : सभापति जी, मैं माननीय सदस्यों का आभारी हूं कि आप सभी ने बहुत इंटरेस्ट के साथ इस बिल का स्वागत किया है। यह बिल वैसे लास्ट सैशन में आना था लेकिन नहीं आ पाया। जो रिकमेंडेशंस हमारे पास स्टैंडिंग कमेटी की ओर से आए थे, उनमें से काफी रिकमेंडेशंस हमने इंक्लूड की हैं। सबसे बड़ा रिकमेंडेशन यह था कि प्रोपोज्ड बोर्ड में जो मैम्बर्स की संख्या 21 थी, इसे बढ़ाकर हम 34 करने जा रहे हैं। कई सदस्यों ने बताया कि एक्सपर्ट्स लोग भी इसमें शामिल हों, इसलिए 3 पार्लियामेंट के मैम्बर्स, 3 जूट फार्मर्स, 3 जूट वर्कर्स और 2 जूट एक्सपर्ट्स का इसमें समावेश किया गया है। इसके अलावा जो माइक्रो, स्मॉल और मीडियम स्केल इंडस्ट्री है, इसमें से भी 2 मैम्बर्स लिये गये [r53]हैं।

जो पहले प्रपोज्ड 21 सदस्यों का था, उसमें अब 34 होंगे। यह सब बराबर होने के बावजूद इसमें एमपीज़, जूट वरकर्स, जूट एक्सपर्ट्स, जूट फारमर्स की जो कमी थी, अब उसके लिये एक कमेटी होगी।

माननीय सभापति जी, जो रिकमैंडेशन्स 7 थी, उनमें से 6 शामिल कर ली गयी हैं। अभी एक अब्रेला की बात की गई है, लेकिन जे.सी.आई. के बारे में मैं बाद में कहूंगा। इंस्टीट्युट ऑफ इंडियन जूट इंडस्ट्री रिसर्च एसोसिएशन प्राइवेट इंडस्ट्रियलिस्ट्स लोगों की बॉडी है, जिसे इसमें शामिल करने का कोई मतलब नहीं है। हम जो ग्रांट हर साल देते हैं, उसमें 10-10 परसेंट कम करते जा रहे हैं। इसलिये वह ग्रांट नहीं रहेगी। वे इंडिपैंडेंटली रन करेंगे, क्योंकि यह रिसर्च एसोसिएशन प्राइवेट लोगों की है।

जहां तक जूट टैक्नोलोजी का सवाल है, वह कोलकाता यूनिवर्सिटी और गवर्नमेंट ऑफ वैस्ट बंगाल के एफिलिएशन में है। इसको इसमें शामिल करने का कोई मतलब नहीं है। रिसर्च इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ जूट फाइबर टैक्नोलोजी का रजिस्ट्रेशन सोसायटीज एक्ट के अंदर हुआ है। इसलिये इसे इसमें शामिल करने का कोई मतलब नहीं है। इसके अलावा जो बीजेएल है, उसकी मिल बंद है। अगर बीआईएफआर के लोग कहेंगे तो उसका आउटलैट सेल करने की बात होगी। जहां तक जेसीआई की बात है, मैं कहना चाहूंगा कि इसका पूरा काम कामर्शियली है और उसके हिसाब से आजतक हमने जो प्रोक्योरमेंट दिया है, 2003-04 में एमएसपी. 860 रुपये था, 2007-08 में 1055 रुपये हम लोग देने जा रहे हैं। इसमें तकरीबन 1200 एम्पलाईज़ हैं। जब हम एमएसपी करते हैं तो जितने कैजुअल लैबर हैं, हम उसका उपयोग करते हैं। पूरे देश में 172 ऐसे सैंटर्स हैं। इसके अलावा ऐसे 20 प्रपोज्ड सैंटर्स हैं। जब सीज़न आता है तो उनकी संख्या बढ़ा देते हैं। जेसीआई पूरी तरह से कामर्शियल है और मौका आने पर जब हम प्रोक्योरमेंट करते हैं, तो एमएसपी का उपयोग करते हैं। मैं समझता हूं कि जूट बोर्ड और जे.सी.आई. को हम इस अब्रेला में शामिल करने के हक में हैं।...(व्यवधान)

SHRI SANTASRI CHATTERJEE : Sir, if you allow me, I just want to refer to paragraph 52 of the Report of the Standing Committee on Labour. It says:

> "The Committee note that the Bill seeks to establish a National Jute Board for the development of the cultivation, manufacture and marketing of jute and jute products. The proposed National Jute Board will act as an umbrella body for the entire jute sector, particularly to avoid the multiplicity of efforts and programmes of various organisations in the jute sector. However, subsequently, it has been clarified by the Ministry of Textiles that this may be a long term objective. Initially, the primary objective of establishing the National Jute Board is to coordinate and integrate the development programmes of various organisations engaged in the jute sector."

MR. CHAIRMAN : You kindly read the specific portion only.

SHRI SANTASRI CHATTERJEE : Sir, it further says:

> "As regards merger of other organisations engaged in the sector such as Jute Corporation of India, Office of the Jute Commissioner, etc., it has been stated that these organisations are performing their assigned duties effectively and that their merger at this stage will create legal and administrative hassles and such a behemoth may lose focus on its assigned duties. The reasons put forth by the Ministry of Textiles for not merging various organisations engaged in the jute sector in the proposed National Jute Board is not acceptable to the Committee due to the fact that the goals of the Bill, *i.e.* formation of an umbrella body for the entire jute sector, can only be achieved by bringing in all the constituents under one roof. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the National Jute Board may be established by merging various organisations engaged in the jute sector for the integrated and effective development of the jute sector."

This is the unanimous recommendation of the Committee.[R54]

श्री शंकरसिंह वाघेला : मैं आपकी बात से सहमत हूँ। पहले बोर्ड बन जाने दीजिए। जेसीआई का सारा कामकाज कॉमर्शियल है। उसके 1200 से ज्यादा इंप्लॉइज़ हैं। अगर जेसीआई जूट बोर्ड में चला जाएगा तो जूट बोर्ड वायेबल नहीं बनेगा। इसका बजट अलग है, उसका बजट अलग है। जेसीआई पब्लिक सैक्टर अंडरटेकिंग्ज़ में है। उसके लिए फिर संसद में आना पड़ेगा, फिर फॉर्मेलिटी करनी पड़ेगी। न्यू कोर्स में जेसीआई को भी मैं इनक्लूड करने के पक्ष में हूँ, लेकिन समय आ जाने दीजिए। इसमें ऐसा नहीं है कि एक अंब्रैला के नीचे आए तो वह कोई अच्छी बात है। इसके बाद मैं कहूँगा कि जूट पैकेजिंग एक्ट के तहत, यूपीए सरकार आने के बाद, शुगर और फूडग्रेन्स में सबसे ज्यादा बैग्ज़ का उपयोग होता है। पहले 80 प्रतिशत जूट हो, 20 प्रतिशत प्लास्टिक हो, ऐसा था। मैं प्लास्टिक के इलाके से आता हूँ, फिर भी गोल्डन फाइबर, ईको फ्रैन्डली के हिसाब से 100 प्रतिशत इन दो कैटेगरीज़ में पैकेजिंग एक्ट के नीचे रखा। इनकी रेकमेंडेशन आई थी कि जूट कम रहे, फिर भी हमने कैबिनेट से फैसला लेकर 100 प्रतिशत जूट शुगर और फूडग्रेन्स में रखा। मैं यह भी कहना चाहूंगा कि जूट प्रोडक्शन पूरा नहीं है। जूट के बैग्ज़ पूरे एवलेबल नहीं हैं। शुगर और फूडग्रेन्स में भी हमारे पास पूरा मैटीरियल नहीं है। हमारे इतना फेवर करने के बाद भी प्रोडक्शन सही नहीं होगा तो सप्लाइ करने में एफसीआई को प्रॉबलम होगी। जब गवर्नमैंट मांग रही है कि हमें भी बैग दीजिए तो हमारे पास जितने बैग स्टॉक में होने चाहिए, वे नहीं हैं, फिर भी हम कोशिश करते हैं कि जितना हो सके, जूट का फेवर हो। इतना ही नहीं, जूट के साथ हमने केनाफ़ और मेष्टा को भी इनक्लूड किया है। मैं समझता हूँ कि आने वाले दिनों में जूट की स्कीम्स का लाभ राज्य सरकारों के माध्यम से लिया जाएगा। हमारे पास जूट टैक्नोलॉजी मिशन 1 और मिशन 2 कृषि मंत्रालय के पास है। इसका लाभ सीड्ज़ और दूसरी रिसर्च में किसान ले सकते हैं। मिनी मिशन-3 और 4 भी हमारे पास है। मिनी मिशन-3 में हमने 38.60 करोड़ रुपये अलॉट किये हैं। मिनी मिशन-4 के लिए 260 करोड़ रुपये हमने अलॉट किये हैं। कुल 298 करोड़ रुपये मिनी मिशन 3 और 4 के नीचे अलॉटमैंट है। इसका लाभ सभी राज्य स्पेशली वैस्ट बंगाल और आंध्र प्रदेश ले सकते हैं। हम परस्यू करते हैं राज्य सरकारों को कि वे इसका लाभ लें। मैं समझता हूँ कि आने वाले दिनों में इसका लाभ सबको मिलेगा।

मैं ज्यादा समय नहीं लूंगा। जूट बोर्ड का फॉर्मेशन इसके बाद हो जाएगा। इसके बाद अंब्रैला वाली बात जेसीआई की, चूँकि वह पब्लिक सैक्टर अंडरटेकिंग है, इसलिए न्यू कोर्स में अलग से उस पर विचार किया जाएगा, इसकी कॉमर्शियल एक्टिविटीज़ पर विचार किया जाएगा।

इस बिल को जो समर्थन आपने दिया है, उसके लिए मैं सदन के सभी सदस्यों का आभार व्यक्त करते हुए अपनी बात समाप्त करता हूँ और आशा करता हूँ कि आप इस बिल का समर्थन करेंगे।

श्री राम कृपाल यादव (पटना) : सभापति जी, हमारा भी उसमें नाम था। ...(व्यवधान)

सभापति महोदय : आपका नाम नहीं है।

श्री राम कृपाल यादव : एक स्पष्टीकरण पूछना चाहूँगा।

सभापति महोदय : आपका जो भी सुझाव है, आप लिखित में दीजिए और टेबल पर ले कर दीजिए। हम उसको रिकार्ड पर मान लेंगे।

â€¦(व्यवधान)

श्री राम कृपाल यादव : एक छोटा सा प्रश्न है। ...(व्यवधान)

सभापति महोदय : आप लिखित में दे दीजिए। हाउस का काम होता है! ज़िद करने से क्या लाभ है?

â€¦(व्यवधान)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is:

> "That the Bill to provide for the establishment of a National Jute Board for the development of the cultivation, manufacturing and marketing of jute and jute products and for matters connected therewith and incidental thereto, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.[h55]

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: We will now take up clause by clause consideration of the Bill.

Clause 2 Definitions

Amendment made:

Page 2, *after* line 7, *insertâ€"*

'(dd) "Jute" means the plant of jute, kenaf and mesta;' (3)

(Shri Shankersinh Vaghela)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That clause 2, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 2, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 3 Constitution and incorporation of Board

Amendments made:

Page 2, *after* line 33, *insertâ€"*

"(aa) three Members of Parliament of whom two shall be elected from among themselves by the members of the House of the People and one from among themselves by the members of the Council of States;". (4)

Page 2, *after* line 47, *insertÂÂâ€"*

'(ea) three members of jute farmers of which one from State of West Bengal and two from other States on rotational basis to be nominated by the Central Government;

(eb) three members of jute workers of which one from State of West Bengal and two from other States nominated by the Central Government on rotational basis;

(ec) two experts from the field of jute technology and related field to be nominated by the Central Government;

(ed) two members from the "micro enterprises", "small enterprises" and "medium enterprises" dealing in jute industry to be nominated by the Central Government.

Explanation,-- For the purpose of this clause, the expressions "medium enterprise", "micro enterprise" and "small enterprise" shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them in clause (g), clause (h) and clause (m) of section 2 of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Act, 2006;'. 27 of 2006 (5)

(Shri Shankersinh Vaghela)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is:

"That clause 3, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 3, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 4 was added to the Bill.

Clause 5 Function of Board

Amendment made:

Page 4, *after* line 45, *insertâ€"*

"(xviia) to undertake research on jute seed to improve quality and to shorten the gestation period of jute crop;

(xviib) to incorporate measures for sustainable Human Resource Development of the jute sector and to provide necessary funds for the same;

(xviic) modernisation of jute sector and technology development;

(xviid) to take steps to protect the interests of jute growers and workers and to promote their welfare by improving their livelihood avenues.". (6)

(Shri Shankersinh Vaghela)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That clause 5, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 5, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 6 to 26 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1 Short title, extent and commencement

Amendment made:

Page 1, line 5, *for* "2006" *substitute* "2008" (2)

(Shri Shankersinh Vaghela)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That clause 1, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 1, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Enacting Formula

Amendment made:

Page 1, line 1, *for* "Fifty-seventh", *substitute* "fifty-ninth". (1)

(Shri Shankersinh Vaghela)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Enacting Formula, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

The Enacting Formula, as amended, was added to the Bill.

The Long Title was added to the Bill.

SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA: I beg to move:

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

The motion was adopted.